

**PROPOSED DETERMINATION UNDER THE PLENARY
POWERS OF THE SPECIES TO WHICH THE TRIVIAL
NAME "SIRTALIS" LINNAEUS, 1758 (AS PUBLISHED
IN THE BINOMINAL COMBINATION "COLUBER
SIRTALIS") (CLASS REPTILIA) IS TO BE APPLIED**

By KARL P. SCHMIDT

(Chief Curator of Zoology, Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago, Illinois,
U.S.A.)

and

ROGER CONANT

(Curator, Philadelphia Zoological Garden, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.)

(Commission's reference Z.N.(S.)433)

Changes of currently used trivial names of North American snakes are proposed by L. M. Klauber, 1948 (*Copeia* **1948** (No. 1): 1-14). The changes in question are all valid under the International Rules, and the changes are based on an exhaustive examination of both the nomenclatorial and zoological questions at issue.

One of the names in question involves two of the most abundant snakes in the North American fauna, which have appeared under their current check-list names (e.g., Stejneger, L., and Thomas Barbour, *A check-list of North American Amphibians and Reptiles*: 171-172) for more than 100 years and have accumulated very large numbers of references. The double transfer of the great list of references would work an especial hardship on the non-taxonomic zoologist, and would require an explanatory phrase accompanying use of the names in the sense proposed by Klauber.

We accordingly ask the Commission to use their plenary powers to direct that the trivial name *sirtalis* Linnaeus, 1758 (as published in the binominal combination *Coluber sirtalis*) shall apply to the species described and figured as *Tropidonotus sirtalis* by J. E. Holbrook in 1842 in *North American Herpetology*; or, a description of the reptiles inhabiting the United States. Philadelphia. Dobson: 5 vols., illus. (Vol. 4: 41, pl. 11). and that "Canada" (restricted to the vicinity of Quebec, see Robert F. Inger, 1946, *Copeia*, **1946**: 254) is to be treated as the type locality of the species, the nomenclature of which is so stabilised.

We further request that the above name, so stabilised, be added to the *Official List of Specific Trivial Names in Zoology*, together with the trivial name *saurita* Linnaeus, 1766 (as published in the binominal combination *Coluber saurita*), the names of these two species being thus placed beyond the range of further dispute. It is to be noted that the currently recognised generic combinations *Thamnophis sirtalis* and *Thamnophis sauritus* have been in use since 1892 and 1893 respectively (cf. Stejneger (L.) and Barbour (T.), 1917. *A check-list of North American Amphibians and Reptiles* (1st ed.): 103).

The use of the trivial name *sirtalis* Linnaeus for the common garter snake has been unquestioned for more than 100 years. Of the American herpetologists canvassed on the subject of the present application, the majority give it their support. The specialists in favor of the above request are :—

- S. C. Bishop, University of Rochester.
C. M. Bogert, The American Museum of Natural History.
Fred R. Cagle, Tulane University.
A. F. Carr, University of Florida.
Doris M. Cochran, United States National Museum.
D. Dwight Davis, Chicago Natural History Museum.
E. R. Dunn, Haverford College.
J. A. Fowler, George Washington University.
Helen T. Gaige, 1211, Ferdon Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan.
Howard K. Gloyd, Chicago Academy of Sciences.
Coleman J. Goin, University of Florida.
Chapman Grant, 2970, 6th Avenue, San Diego, California.
A. B. Grobman, University of Florida.
Norman Hartweg, Museum of Zoology of Michigan University.
R. F. Inger, Chicago Natural History Museum.
Murray L. Johnson, 1207, Medical Arts Building, Tacoma 2, Washington.
Arthur Loveridge, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard.
M. Graham Netting, Carnegie Museum.
J. A. Oliver, University of Florida.
Grace Orton, Carnegie Museum.
C. H. Pope, Chicago Natural History Museum.
Benjamin Shreve, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard.
J. R. Slater, College of Puget Sound.
W. H. Stickel, Fish and Wildlife Service.
R. C. Stebbins, Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California.

These in favor of the change *sensu* Klauber :—

- L. M. Klauber, 233, West Juniper Street, San Diego, California.
C. D. Perkins, Zoological Society of San Diego.
H. M. Smith, University of Illinois.

Not voting :—

- G. S. Myers, Stanford University.
E. H. Taylor, University of Kansas.